

Press Room



CALIFORNIA'S DRUNK AND DRUGGED DRIVING (3D) PREVENTION MONTH FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is 3D Month?

Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month is an annual public awareness campaign conducted at the national level to bring attention to the dangers of impaired driving during the holidays. The campaign takes place throughout the month of December over the peak holiday period.

2. Why is California taking part in 3D Month?

In 2003, 1,445 people were killed and 31,337 injured in alcohol-related crashes in California. This is the fifth consecutive year of increases in alcohol-related fatalities after more than a decade of decline. Each year the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and California Highway Patrol (CHP) work together to prevent impaired driving during peak travel periods, including the Christmas and New Year winter holidays.

3. Who takes part in the California effort?

The OTS and CHP rely on a variety of partners to promote the dangers of impaired driving, including the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and the California Restaurant Association (CRA). Additionally, law enforcement agencies throughout the state conduct efforts aimed at enforcing California's DUI laws, including sobriety checkpoints, and DUI saturation patrols.

4. How does California compare with the rest of the nation with regard to impaired driving?

Nationally, the number of people killed in alcohol-related crashes fell slightly, from 17,419 in 2002 to 17,401 in 2003. While California experienced an increase in alcohol-related fatalities (1,416 in 2002 vs. 1,445 in 2003), the number of people who were injured in alcohol-involved collisions decreased from 32,041 in 2002 to 31,337 in 2003.

5. What is California doing to prevent impaired driving?

During FY 2005, the OTS will allocate more than \$4.7 million to fund 155 grants to police departments in California to conduct sobriety checkpoints during peak holiday periods, including December 2004/January 2005, Labor Day weekend August/September 2005 and December 2005/January 2006.

The OTS also supports 30 "Avoid" programs, which are regional groups of law enforcement agencies that work together to conduct sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols. This approach allows for the pooling of staff and equipment helping local departments to conduct efforts they would not be able to execute on their own. This December, the California Highway Patrol and more than 350 law enforcement agencies throughout California are taking part in the "Avoid" programs.

6. Are the number of DUI arrests increasing in California?

Yes. According to the California Attorney General's Criminal Justice Statistics Center, DUI arrests rose from 179,663 in 2002 to 185,973 in 2003 – a 3.5 percent increase.

7. California has a Zero Tolerance Law. Exactly what does that mean?

California's Zero Tolerance law means that if someone under the legal age of 21 is found to have a blood alcohol content of .01 or greater, they *immediately lose their drivers license for one year*. If the offender does not yet have their driver's license, they must wait to obtain their license.

8. What are the likely consequences of a DUI?

A DUI is a very serious crime and should not be taken lightly. The consequences are much greater than a Saturday afternoon spent in traffic school and can cost thousands of dollars. A convicted DUI offender is likely to experience: probation or jail time, having their car towed and impounded, a hefty increase in auto insurance rates, spending time in DUI treatment programs, doing community service and having their drivers license suspended.

